

NOTES

STATEWIDE:
In 1998, only 4% of child care slots in California were designated for infants. Most slots in center-based care are for older preschool-aged children and therefore infants are more likely to be cared for in a private home.¹

RELATED INDICATORS:
• CalWORKs
• Cost of Child Care
• Developmental Disabilities

Indicator

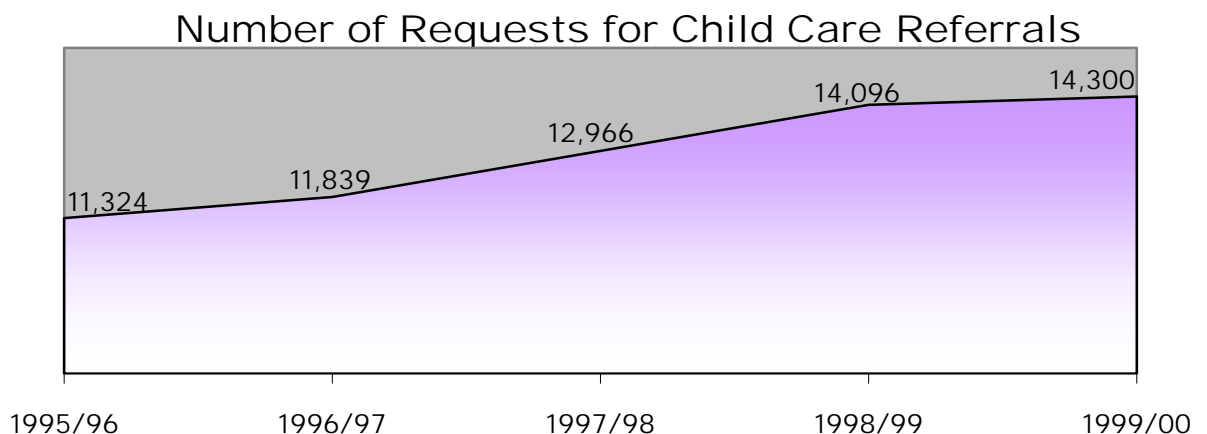
Requests for child care

Definition

The number of requests from parents for assistance in locating child care by type of care and the reason given for needing child care.

Findings

During 1999/2000, there were approximately 14,300 referrals made for child care services by the Children's Home Society of California (CHS), the Child Care Resource and Referral Program in Orange County, which is part of California's Child Care Resource and Referral Network. Employment is the main reason given for seeking child care, a total of 11,169 calls. The highest number of calls seeking child care referrals were for infants (birth to 2 years of age), totaling 8,673.



Trends

From fiscal year 1995/96 to 1999/2000, the number of referrals for child care increased by about 26%, going from 11,324 to 14,300. In addition, the number of requests for "other child care related information" that came into the CHS's Child Care Resource and Referral Program for fiscal year 1999/2000 was 158,809. This is a 354% increase over the past five years when the number of requests for "other child care related information" numbered 34,970 in 1995/96.

REQUESTS FOR CHILD CARE

Requests for Child Care Referrals by Region of County,
Target Age and Reason Child Care is Needed for 1999/2000

| Age of Child (1) (2) | North | South | East | West |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Infant (0-2) | 2,373 | 2,056 | 1,743 | 1,593 |
| Preschool (2-5) | 1,295 | 1,036 | 1,040 | 920 |
| School Age (6-12) | 711 | 377 | 459 | 420 |
| Reason Care is Needed | | | | |
| Employment | 3,122 | 3,702 | 2,312 | 2,129 |
| School/Training | 225 | 104 | 182 | 134 |
| Seeking Employment | 87 | 63 | 63 | 58 |
| Other (3) | 48 | 61 | 47 | 43 |

(1) Reflects duplicate counts because callers may have multiple children.

(2) The above table does not include the calls received from callers outside of Orange County and referrals provided to CalWORKs participants at co-located office at Social Service Agency.

(3) Other includes: relocation, end leave of absence, extended work hours, job travel or schedule change, special needs, dissatisfied, no provider, parent needs, CPS/respite, alternate care, mild illness, child needs, and no reason given.

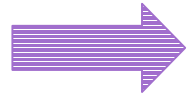
Summary

Despite Orange County experiencing a strong economy during the past fiscal year, accessing child care that meets families' needs continues to be a challenge for many parents. While the county's population continues to grow, the number of family child care homes and centers actually decreased. A number of capacity-building efforts have been funded to address the increased need for child care, but experts in the field acknowledge that it is not enough to simply increase the number of licensed providers. Instead, capacity-building efforts need to focus on areas where the need is greatest. For instance, while there tend to be vacancies in family child care homes in the northern part of the county, there are often shortages reported in the central and southern regions. In addition, the CalWORKs Program continues to highlight the need to meet the child care needs of a diverse population. This includes the continued need for night and weekend care to accommodate those parents who hold jobs with nontraditional work schedules. Moreover, there is an increasing need for licensed bilingual child care providers and more affordable centers for low-income working parents.

Implications

There continues to be limited availability of infant/toddler care in Orange County. Less than 5% of all spaces in licensed child care centers are for children under the age of two.⁴ CHS continues to participate in the California Child Care Initiative Project, whose focus is on increasing the supply of quality infant/toddler child care. Trainings are provided in English, Spanish and Vietnamese. In addition, CHS's Child Care Resource and Referral Program has been working with the Department of Social Services and the Orange County Child Care and Development Planning Council to build child care capacity. Without more subsidies available to pay for child care or other sources for increased family income, capacity-building may not meet the needs of low income families.

NOTES



SEE
SUPPLEMENTAL
TABLES FOR
ADDITIONAL
DATA

NATIONWIDE:
In 1999, 64% of mothers with children under age six, 78% of mothers with children ages 6-13, and almost 60% of mother with infants (under age one) were in the labor force.²
In 2001, the Children's Defense Fund reported that an estimated 7 million school-age children are left alone after school without supervision.³

DATA SOURCE:
Children's Home Society of California's Child Care Resource and Referral Program

NOTES:
¹California County Data Book 1999
²U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1999
³The State of America's Children Yearbook, 2001
⁴California Child Care Portfolio, 1999

SUPPLEMENTAL TABLES: ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Indicator

Requests and Cost for Child Care

Number of Requests for "Other Child Care Related Information"

| Year | Number of Requests |
|---------|--------------------|
| 1999/00 | 158,809 |
| 1998/99 | 67,505 |
| 1997/98 | 41,398 |
| 1996/97 | 26,236 |
| 1995/96 | 34,970 |
| 1994/95 | 26,479 |

Source: Children's Home Society of California's Child Care and Development Services.

County-Wide Average Orange County Family/ Child Care Center Costs*

| Licensed Family Child Care Homes** | 94/95 | 97/98 | 98/99 | 99/00 | 00/01 | Time Period |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|
| Infant Care | \$130 | \$119 | \$126 | \$131 | \$133 | Per week |
| Preschool- 2 through 5 years of age | \$119 | \$111 | \$117 | \$122 | \$123 | Per week |
| School-age- 6 through 13 years of age | \$ 77 | \$ 90 | \$93 | \$96 | \$97 | Per week |
| Child Care Centers*** | 94/95 | 97/98 | 98/99 | 99/00 | 00/01 | Time Period |
| Infant Care | \$167 | \$163 | \$165 | \$170 | \$174 | Per week |
| Preschool- 2 through 5 years of age | \$126 | \$110 | \$107 | \$109 | \$112 | Per week |
| School-age- 6 through 13 years of age | \$ 79 | \$ 75 | \$77 | \$80 | \$84 | Per week |

*Costs are from the Children's Home Society of California's Child Care Resource and Referral KIDCARE database. All of the care providers on our database are licensed providers, however, not all licensed care providers choose to be listed on our database. CHS currently has about 80% of all licensed care providers in Orange County listed in our database.

**Family Child Care providers care for children in their homes and are licensed as follows: Small child care- 1) 4 infants only, 2) 6 children, no more than 3 of whom may be infants, 3) 8 children, no more than 2 infants, and 2 must be 6 years of age or older. Large family child care- which requires a full time assistant to work with the licensed care provider- 1) 12 children, no more than 4 of whom may be infants, 2) 14 children, not more than 3 of whom may infants and 2 must be 6 years of age or older.

***Child care centers include private-for-profit centers, parent-run cooperatives and church-based non-profits. The state regulates the ratio of caregivers, square footage and staff qualifications.

Source: Children's Home Society of California's Child Care Resource and Referral's Care Finder Database.